

A
LETTER
Written by his Highness
The PRINCE ELECTOR of
BRANDENBOURGH,

Unto his most Serene and Illustrious
HIGHNES

R I C H A R D
LORD PROTECTOR

Of the Common-wealth of *England, Scotland,*
and *Ireland*, with the Territories and Do-
minions thereunto belonging.

DE NOTING

Their *Highness's* joyn-Interest in the protecting and De-
fending of the *Reformed Protestant Cause* ; and the *Swedes*
converting of those Forces, and means which they receive
from *England*, and their other *Allyes*, for the propagating
of the *Protestant Cause* : towards the compassing of their
own ambitious ends, the subverting of the *Protestant*
Churches, and the disturbing of the publike *Peace* in all
parts.

Translated into English out of the Latine Copy
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In the Year **MDCLXIX.**

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A HISTORY OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE 18TH CENTURY

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Most Serene, and Illustrious Prince, Lord, and Honour'd Friend,

Ever since it seemed good to the *Almighty* to permit the pure *Evangelical Doctrine* to be profest in *England*; the *Protestant Churches* abroad, especially the *Reformed ones*, have at all times, in their greatest *Adversities* and *Persecutions*, there met with a signal *Reception*, and *assistance*; which is manifest to the whole *world*, and both the *French* and *Netherlandish Nations*, do most gratefully acknowledge, and cannot sufficiently praise for the same. Wherefore being fallen into these unfortunate times, wherein the *Protestant Cause* (as well in relation to the *Ecclesiastical* as *Temporal* affairs) seems not only to be *disturbed*, but even *subverted* in these parts, by the *Protestant Professors* themselves. And pondering upon the remedies necessary towards the preventing of such eminent *Evils*; We could not chuse but reflect upon your *Highness*, whose *Father* of glorious *Memory*, having imparted unto us by his *Publike Minister*, the share he bore, joynly with us, in the concernments of the *Protestant Professors, and Churches*, not doubting but your *Highness* retains the same inclinations and thoughts; We have the more confidently adventured, during these *Publike Calamities*, to treat with you theron, and as well joynly by the Envoy, which we have designed towards your *Highness*, as by these our Letters, to impart our minde unto you, lest by the retardment of the one or the other, the *Publike good* might be prejudiced.

Your *Highness* cannot be ignorant, that this present *King of Sweden* entred upon a war, some 3 years since, against the *Polanders*; with a pretence, and under a colour (amongst other things) to promote the *Protestant Cause* in those parts; though the success thereof proved no other, save *The reducing of some hundreds of Protestant Churhes into ashes*; *The de-*

destroying of an infinite number of Protestant Families; the dispersing and dissolving of several Protestant Congregations, and the exposing of the Professors of the Divine Gospel Truths, to all kinde of Ignominie and Infamie. Insomuch, as since the memory of man, the Protestant concernments in those parts, never met with a greater destruction, and desolation; nor not under the Papistical Governments, as under that pretended Patron, and Defender of the Protestant Cause.

Neither did those Evils terminate within the Confines of Poland; but the aforesaid King, did (among others) involve the Prince of Transilvania in the like Calamities, and reduced that most zealous Prince for the true Protestant Cause, unto such a pass, as that he was in danger to lose his whole Country, as well as his good Subjects, their Livelyhoods, and Subsistances, for the Liberty of their Consciences.

And that it may more evidently appear, the said King giveth not *et H*aven, but the *World*, coveting to have the Dominion of the *Land*, as well as to *Lord it at Sea*; He did finally set upon the King of Denmark, contrary to the Faith which was plighted, and the Peace which was made by the Interposition, Endeavours, and Authority of your Highness's Father, without any foregoing Declaration, or Warning; a thing which is observed even amongst the *Heathens*; assailing a Prince who is a strict Professor and observer of the Protestant Faith, at such an unexpected time, when he was deprived of all his *Guarrisons* and *strong Holds*, and did not in the least suspect; much less dream of, such a kinde of proceeding, by reason of the immediate proceeding peace, procured by the endeavours of so many Friends, and at so great a disadvantage to the King of Denmark.

In like manner the Duke of *Curland*, did sadly experiment the effects of these like proceedings; *One who is a Lutheran*, of the same *Confession*, which the King of *Sweden* professeth, and by his *solemn Oath*, will only tollerate in his Dominions; Yet nevertheless after the said Duke had conferred so great

Benefits on the Swedes, as that he thereby became suspected to his Lord, the King of Poland; even after he had made his Capitulations for his Neutralitie with them, he was by an unheard of example, and by a stratagem cast out of his habitation, and together with his most Illustrious Lady Dutches, and seven Children, carried away Captives to Riga.

And as he cannot by the *Holy Writ* warrant the not sparing of those of his own Profession, when he sees an opportunity to seize their Lands and Goods; in like manner his Zeal, and Vehementy moves him, to impose Laws on the Protestant Reformed Professors, in matters of their belief, and to force their Consciences in Divine concernments, by his Proceedings against them; an evident Testimony whereof is most apparent at *Elbing*, wherein we the rather instance, because it may best be known in *England*; in which place those of the *Reformed profession*, at their being under a *Papist King*, did enjoy the free exercise of their Religion; But at present, the *Lutheran Supervisor*, being placed there as a wrack to the Consciences of those who are minded to take the Ministry upon themselves, doth enforce them by an unheard of example, to approve his Confession, and to obey him in matters of Religion; depriving likewise the Civil Magistrate, (who are all for the most part of the *Reformed profession*) of the Right and Priviledg which is due to them in the like Cases; especially in the ordaining of Ministers: Not permitting the Administration of the Communion, according to the Form of the *Reformed Protestant Churches*, save unto strangers of the English Nation, at the request of the English Resident. Moreover his vehementy is so great against the rest of the *Reformed professors*, as that to the prejudice of Men, and Gods glory, The psalms of *David*, which for several years were sung in their Churches (and ought not only to be free unto, but enjoyed by all Men) are totally expunged out of the Church.

These things being maturely considered; we cannot be induced to believe, that your Highness, (as the Swedes do boast

boast will afford them relief, and assist them to carry on their unlawful designes, since they abound and proceed with so much violence, and injustice ; converting their own Means, and Forces, and the assistances which they receive from others, to the prejudice, *Ruine, and utter detriment of the Church* ; and to the disturbing of the publike peace in all parts.

And as we have been informed, these implacable Enemies of the Protestant Religion, make use of the pretence of Religion, and urge, that their designe is against the *Catholicks*, and chiefly against the *House of Austria*, who should have an intent to master the Ports of the *Baltick Sea*, as they most malitiously give out ; and do even *slander us*, in that *we should have made a League with the Catholikes against the Protestants*. But as all men know, the War is waged between the *Danes* and the *Swedes*, both of them, of the *Evangelical Profession* ; and if the Emperor will not permit the *Swedes* to deprive the King of *Denmark*, and himself of *Holstein*, (which is an unquestionable part of the *German Empire*, and whereof he is the *Supream Lord*) but by the Forces which he hath sent doth hinder the same, doth he any thing thereby, save what belongs to a good, pious, and *Christian Prince* ? and should he omit the same, would he not be guilty of deserting the defence of his Territories, and the neglect of that duty which is committed to him by God ? And if we, as a Member, do assist him the *Head*, herein, in each others defence, do we any thing hereby but our duty ? and might we not be accused of deserting our Countreys defence should we not joyn therein ?

These, and no other, are the *Austrian*, and our Intentions, and Resolutions ; and if happily there chance to be any other Dissentions between the *House of Austria*, and other Kings, States, and Commonwealths, they relate not at all to this business ; nor do the like contentions, which others may have with the *House of Austria*, concern the *Roman Empire*, and its *Chief* : Nor is it just that any obstacles should be

be made, on this account, as *Impediments* to these so pious, honest, and necessary Endeavours. For it is so far from the Intentions of his *Imperial Majesty*, to deprive any one of their Ports, or Havens, as that he doth not so much as lay claim to the least part of any of them ; He hath sent his Forces to restore unto the right owners, that which belongs unto them ; not to bereave them of their goods, or possessions : *An instance whereof may appear by the Isle of Alsen, not so soon taken from the Swedes, as restored to the King of Denmark, its true Lord and owner ; that he might take the Defence thereof upon himself, that so those commodious Ports and Havens, which are so advantagiously seated on the Baltic Sea, might only be impowered, and defended by Danish Garrisons.*

And what needs there any further contest of words here-on ? come we to the matter it self ; *Let the King of Sweden therefore restore that which he hath unjustly and violently taken ; Let him make amends for the Losses which we and others have sustained by his means : Let him give security that he will not henceforth invade others, as he hath lately done the Poles, the Danes, and the Curlander : and we shall in like manner take care, that none of the Emperors, or of the associated Forces shall at any time be brought into the Field, or made use of against any of the Neighbouring, or other ports whatsoever. Nor shall they need to fear the least obstruction in the Trade from these parts ; since it concerns us chiefly, that the Commerce be free, encouraged, and augmented ; Neither do we see how all this can be compassed by any speedier means, save, *That all things be restored to the same state and condition as they were before the beginning of all these Danish troubles ; which is the thing we shall mainly endeavour to compass.**

But with what impudence can the *Swedes* blemish us for having entered into a League with the *Catholikes* ? since they have done the same with the *French* ; unless they accuse them also of the like Heretical abominations, which they themselves seem to abhor : and I pray, what kinde of

Evangelical profession can those boast of, who whilst they inveigh against the Papistical purgatory (which we know through Gods Grace is not able to hurt any one) do in the mean while exercise all the unwarrantablest proceedings imaginable against the said protestant Churches, and the Members thereof ? and what part or share of the Gospel, can those appropriate to themselves, who, both with Fire and Sword, have prosecuted, if not well nigh subverted, both Poland, Denmark, and one of the nor least contemptiblest parts of Germany ? and who, whilst they condemn those good works, which the Papists account requisite towards the attaining unto Salvation ; do live and act in such a manner, as if Heaven and eternal Glory were only to be acquir'd by sinning, and committing of horrid Actions ? Moreover, what share can they pretend unto the Name of Christians, who commit those things, whereby the Gentiles, and Heathens (who are most careful in keeping and observing their promises) may now, as well as formerly, alledge, to the great dishonor of the Christian appellation ; That they can only boast themselves to be Christians by their Treachery, and perfidiousnes.

Wherefore it only remains, *That we implore, and beseech your Highness, as you have a regard unto the Glory of God, the welfare of the Church, the love of Justice, the common Tye of Friendship, and our joyn protestant reformed profession, that in case you be sollicited, and importuned to allow the Swedes assistance, and relief ; You may be pleased to penetrate into their Actions, and to be moved by these foregoing Holy Inducements, rather to choose to help, and stand by the oppressed ; then the oppressors : whereby, as your Highness cannot put a greater Obligation upon us, and all those who love, and endeavour the welfare of the true Protestant Cause ; so can you not do a more acceptable service to God ; unto whose Protection we commit you.* Given at Rijpen in Friesland, on the 24 day of the Moneth of December, in the year of our Lord God 1658.

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